

NOAA Ocean Council Terms of Reference

Purpose:

The NOAA Ocean Council (Council) is established as the principal advisory body to the Administrator and focal point for the agency's ocean activities and interests, including open-ocean, near-shore, coastal, estuarine and Great Lakes activities. Specific purposes of the Council are to:

- Identify agency-wide ocean priorities;
- Coordinate and promulgate priorities among line offices and goal teams;
- Guide the strategic advancement of priorities within the Committee on Ocean Policy ocean governance structure;
- Advise on agency-wide ocean policy;
- Enhance communication of ocean priorities;
- Oversee selected major projects;
- Assist in the advancement of Ocean literacy
- Address other relevant issues, as appropriate.

Membership:

Leadership

- NOAA Oceans and Coasts Assistant Administrator (Co-Chair)
- NOAA Fisheries Assistant Administrator (Co-Chair)

Principals

- NOAA Oceans and Coasts
- NOAA Fisheries
- NOAA Satellites and Information
- NOAA Research
- NOAA Weather Service
- NOAA Marine and Aviation Operations
- NOAA Program Planning and Integration

Participating and Advisory

- NOAA Program Analysis and Evaluation
- NOAA Legislative Affairs
- NOAA Public Affairs
- NOAA Education Council
- NOAA Observing System Council
- NOAA Research Council
- NOAA International Affairs Council
- NOAA Platform Allocation Council
- NOAA Finance
- NOAA Administration
- NOAA General Counsel

Executive Secretariat:

Policy Planning and Analysis Division, NOAA Oceans and Coasts

Roles and Responsibilities:

The NOAA Ocean Council shall provide recommendations to the NOAA Executive Panel. The Assistant Administrators of NOAA Oceans and Coasts and NOAA Fisheries will co-chair the Council. The Council will:

- The NOC will serve as a forum for setting agency-wide ocean priorities, by assessing external trends and drivers (science and technology, policy, economy and business), to provide guidance on any necessary evolution of NOAA's enterprise.
- The NOC will coordinate and promulgate agency-wide ocean priorities among the line offices and goal teams
- The NOC will serve as a forum for coordinating agency-wide ocean priorities to be strategically

advanced within the interagency COP governance structure (ICOSRMI, SIMOR, JSOST and related working groups).

- The NOC, as the Agency's primary crosscutting body dealing with ocean issues, will advance NOAA's ocean priorities through the development and implementation of NOAA ocean policy.
- The NOC will enhance communication of NOAA ocean priorities to the Department of Commerce and externally, by producing and reporting quarterly highlights to be distributed to the Department, NOAA leadership, the Line Offices and PPBES goal team leads.
- The NOC will continue to provide oversight to assigned major projects, ensuring that key decision points are adequate for approval at the NOAA Executive level.
- The NOC will allocate time as needed to address other relevant issues, as appropriate

Decision Making Process:

Meetings will be held monthly. The Council may establish permanent or temporary subordinate bodies as needed. Decisions will be accomplished by informed consensus of all members. The Chairs will strive for consensus on every issue. At their discretion, the Co-Chairs may submit an issue to a vote of the principal Council members. Notwithstanding a vote of the principals, the Co-Chairs maintain 51 percent of the total Council vote and have final decision making authority when consensus is not achieved.